

**Security Council**

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Identical letters dated 19 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On 18 March 2018, the President of the Turkish regime declared that his invading forces had gained control of the Syrian city of Afrin after two months of aggression. Thousands of civilians have been killed or injured in and around Afrin as a result of this illegal act, which contravenes international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. This crime has also led to the displacement of tens of thousands of Syrians, who have been driven from their homes and deprived of basic services.

Among other crimes, the Turkish military forces have carried out ethnic cleansing, looted civilians' property, destroyed their homes, arrested many of them and held them in detention sites where conditions contravene the standards established under international humanitarian law. These acts constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Every resolution adopted by the Security Council has stressed the need to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of Syria and to respect its sovereignty. However, not only has the Erdoğan regime violated the most basic rules of good-neighbourliness and human rights; it is also unabashedly threatening to occupy more Syrian territory in the governorates of Aleppo, Raqqah and Hasakah.

These policies are inextricably linked with the continued, illegal aggression of the United States and its allies against the sovereignty and unity of the land and people of Syria. The Syrian Arab Republic condemns this Turkish occupation and its crimes and calls upon the invading Turkish forces to withdraw immediately from the Syrian territory that they have occupied. Syria once again calls on the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility to put an end to these attacks; compel Turkish forces to withdraw immediately from Syrian territory; and provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the Syrian victims of the aggressive policies of Turkey.

Not only do the acts of aggression committed by Turkey imperil civilian lives and the integrity of the land and people of Syria; they also prolong the war on Syria, thereby benefiting the terrorists and their sponsors, and threaten regional and international peace and security.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Bashar Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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